
LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Remarks on Transformational Diplomacy

By

Condoleezza Rice

United States Secretary of State

[The following are excerpts of a speech presented at Gaston Hall, Georgetown University Washington, D.C., February 12, 2008.]

Two years ago, I spoke about how our world is changing and how we must change diplomacy as a result:

To work in new ways, in new places, with new partners, and for new purposes.

I call this transformational diplomacy. And I have returned to Georgetown today not to review the work of the past, but to consider the work of the future.

In thinking through the future of our diplomacy, my team at the Department of State (DoS) and I have benefited from our internal efforts, but also from several external bipartisan studies that have been done, such as the Embassy of the Future project, the Helping to Enhance the Livelihood of People Around the World (HELP) Commission on Foreign Assistance, and my own Advisory Committee on Transformational Diplomacy. And last summer I gathered everybody, our major management team, and we had a retreat to talk about how to advance the future of diplomacy in our changing world.

In the three years that I have been Secretary of State I have had the honor of serving beside men and women of courage and dedication:

- The Foreign Service
- Civil Service
- Foreign Service Nationals

America has the finest diplomatic service in the world and I see the evidence of this time and time again. I see it in our many diplomats who are now living and working far apart from their families in difficult and often dangerous posts. I see it in our development professionals who make their homes in conditions that are often hard to bear, simply because they believe that no human being should suffer in poverty.

In that regard, I just want to note that I see Andrew Natsios, also a member of this great community and our former Director of USAID. Thank you for the great service that you did in the service of these goals, Andrew. I see also courageous diplomats and civilians who are embedded in combat units in Iraq and in Afghanistan, people who have to show up every day in Kevlar and who are defending our country, side-by-side with our men and women in uniform.

You see, America's diplomats and America's development professionals are up to any challenge. Still, change isn't easy, especially right now when the international system is reordering itself, when we're rethinking many of our assumptions about international politics, and when we must reorganize ourselves to succeed in the 21st century. There are no precedents or playbooks for this work. We

are trying to do things, quite literally, that have never been done before and this is the work of a generation.

But we should be confident because America has risen to these challenges before. We recall, of course, the time of our founding when we forged relations with great powers as a young state, when we created the DoS and laid a foundation that sustained our diplomacy for many decades. And to think:

Thomas Jefferson, the first Secretary of State, apparently did all of this with seven people, eleven by the time he left. Now I am going to assure you it took twice as many people to get me here today.

We recall also that in the early 20th century, when America emerged as a great power and created new institutions, we created the Foreign Service to advance our global interests. And we recall the early years of the Cold War when we expanded our diplomacy to dozens of new countries, created new agencies for development and public diplomacy, and summoned our young citizens to study Russia's culture and politics and language.

And one of those young Americans who answered that summons because it was the patriotic thing to do, to speak Russian, was a young girl from Birmingham, Alabama, me. Now it is true that I found my passion and I also found a way out of a dead end music major which was going to lead me to a future of playing at Nordstrom's or teaching kids to murder Beethoven. So I am very grateful that I chose the course that I did.

To us now, these efforts all look like part of a strategic master plan; the creation of the Foreign Service, the creation of the great institutions of diplomacy, public diplomacy of development. But I can assure you they were anything but a strategic master plan. As Dean Acheson wrote,

The significance of events was shrouded in ambiguity. We groped after interpretations of them and hesitated long before grasping what now seems obvious.

That is fitting advice for us as we consider our present and as we look to our future. The main driver of change today is growing interdependence among peoples and governments and the rapid international movement of information, of capital, of technology and of people. This is commonly referred to as globalization and it is, indeed, transforming our world in two important ways.

On the one hand, globalization is empowering those states that can seize its benefits. In this way, globalization is not displacing the importance of geopolitics, as many assumed that it would in the last decade. Rather, it is reshaping it. In countries like China and India, Nigeria and South Africa, Brazil and Indonesia, countries that had not been the main focus of our diplomacy in the past, billions of citizens are joining the global economy and their growing wealth is translating them into rising national powers. As a result, the landscape of international politics is becoming more decentralized. More countries are pursuing their interests vigorously and to advance our global leadership America must be active in more places.

At the same time, globalization is revealing the weaknesses of many states, their inability to govern effectively and to create opportunities for their people. Many of these states are falling behind. Others are simply failing. And when they do they create holes in the fabric of the international system where terrorists can arm and train to kill the innocent, where criminal networks can traffic in drugs and people and weapons of mass destruction, and where civil conflict can fester and spread and spill over to affect entire regions. Just think of the Afghanistan of 2001.

Perhaps our greatest foreign policy challenge, now and in decades to come, then, stems from the many states that are simply too weak, too corrupt, or too poorly governed to perform even basic

sovereign responsibilities. Responsibilities like policing their territory, governing justly, enabling the potential of their people, and preventing the threats that gather within their countries from destabilizing their neighbors and ultimately, the international system.

In response to these unprecedented challenges, our foreign policy and national security strategy must be guided by the objective that I laid out here at Georgetown two years ago:

To work with our many international partners to build and sustain a world of democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, that reduce widespread poverty, and that conduct themselves responsibly in the international system.

Now some would say that this goal is ambitious and idealistic and in this way, it is keeping – in keeping with the best traditions of American foreign policy. Like any country, the United States has national interests and we use our power to advance them. But what has always distinguished America is that we are a people united and led into the world by universal ideals, our conviction that all human beings are born free, equal in dignity, deserving of justice, the protections of law, and that the most responsible governments are those that respect the rights of their people.

These principles do not lead us to ignore the complex nature of international politics. I can assure you we deal with the world as it is. But America at its best does not accept the world as it is. America at its best unites our power and our principles and works to make the world better than it is – not perfect, but better. We recognize that there will be tensions in the short term between our interests and our ideals. But in the long term, we believe we find the fullest peace and prosperity in an international system that reflects our values. I have called this tradition of ours American Realism.

We will not meet the challenges of the 21st century through military or any other means alone. Our national security requires the integration of our universal principles with all elements of our national power: our defense, our diplomacy, our development assistance, our democracy promotion efforts, free trade, and the good work of our private sector and society. And it is the DoS, more than any other agency of government that is called to lead this work.

We must recognize that this is a place not of privilege and not of entitlement; we must earn it. We must ensure that our ability at the DoS to implement policy is second to none. We must match a can-do spirit of our diplomats with the appropriate resources. Resources that unfortunately dried up in the 1990s as our country looked to cash in on a peace dividend.

Since 2001, this Administration has begun the long-term effort of rebuilding and transforming American diplomacy for the challenges of the new era. President Bush has designated the DoS as a national security agency. And to fulfill this mandate, transformational diplomacy requires a civilian-led, whole-of-government approach to the challenges of our time. Already, our diplomats are showing and have shown that with adequate funding and support, they can lead this kind of effort.

Consider for a moment the case of Colombia. Several years ago, Colombia was on the verge of becoming a failed state. Insurgents were winning the war, thousands were fleeing their homes, and the democratic government was losing control, literally physical control of parts of the country. So the Clinton Administration began, and our Administration has sustained and expanded, a comprehensive strategy to support Colombia. Our diplomats have led a country team that unites our law enforcement agencies, our military, our development professionals, and our trade negotiators. And we have helped our democratic allies in Colombia to reclaim their country and improve the life of their people. Now, the best way to support Colombia in completing its transformation to a pillar of peace and prosperity in our hemisphere is to pass the free trade agreement that we have negotiated and I urge Congress to do so.

Efforts like these are a foundation for future progress. Now let us consider what it will take to realize the vision of transformational diplomacy. First, America must recruit and train a new generation of Foreign Service professionals with new expectations of what life as a diplomat will be. We see glimpses of this in many places today. We see it in the jungles of Colombia where our diplomats are helping old guerrilla fighters become new democratic citizens. We see it in the towns of the West Bank where our diplomats are supporting Palestinian efforts to build the democratic institutions of a decent and free future state. We see it in Zimbabwe, where our diplomats are taking up the just and peaceful cause of a tyrannized people. These men and women are not managing problems; they are working with partners to solve problems.

That is the essence of transformational diplomacy and we measure our success in the progress countries make in moving from war to peace, despotism to democracy, poverty and inequality to prosperity and social justice. This mission will require our diplomats to be active in new places far beyond the walls of foreign chancelleries and American embassies. It will also require them to work with new partners, not only with a nation's government but also its local leaders and civil society, its entrepreneurs and its non-government organizations; those impatient patriots who are working to open schools and clinics and secure their neighborhoods, to start businesses and attract investment, to fight corruption and promote equal justice under the law for men and women.

We will also need a diplomatic posture that reflects the landscape of international politics in the 21st century. We must move more of our people out of Washington and dramatically increase the number of diplomats we deploy overseas, especially in countries like China and India. And we have begun to do this. When I took office, America had the same number of DoS personnel in Germany as we did in India. So in the past three years we have shifted about one-tenth of our political, economic, and public diplomacy officers to emerging new centers of international power.

Now to be clear, we still need diplomats in traditional centers of power in places like Europe. But more and more we need those diplomats to advance transformational goals – not manage the transatlantic alliance; mobilize it to defend our common interests and mobilize it and inspire it to advance our common values, whether that is ending the violence in Darfur or supporting the democratic aspirations of the Burmese people or helping the free Afghan Government to defeat the Taliban and transform its country.

All of this requires further modernization of the DoS. We need to trust our people to manage greater amounts of risk. We need to get our people the best technology to liberate them from embassies and offices so they can work anytime, anywhere. We will need to be better at fostering and rewarding creativity and initiative, innovation and independent thinking, especially among our youngest professionals. We must not only continue to recruit America's best and brightest into our ranks; we must make them even better and even brighter. And that means training in languages like Chinese and Urdu and Arabic and Farsi. And it means greater opportunity for all of our diplomats to spend more time during their careers working in other agencies or doing exchanges with private companies or studying at places like Georgetown.

In the past seven years, we have laid a foundation to achieve these goals. With the support of Congress, President Bush created 2,000 new DoS positions over four years under Secretary Powell. Since 2005, the President and I have requested annual budget increases for our international operations totaling \$8 billion, an increase of over 25 percent. And in the President's 2009 budget, we are asking Congress to fund 1,100 new positions for the DoS and 300 new positions for United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

So as we continue to use our resources wisely and continue to transform the practice, posture, and purpose of our diplomacy, we will need greater capacity. How can it be, for example, that the Pentagon has nearly twice as many lawyers as America has Foreign Service Officers? How can it be

that the United Kingdom, with one-fifth of our population, has a diplomatic service nearly as large as America's? Clearly, modernizing our diplomacy and fully resourcing it will be the challenge of a generation, not just one administration.

To realize this vision of transformational diplomacy, America must also align our foreign assistance with our foreign policy goals, especially the long-term progress of countries and the freedom of peoples. This is beginning to happen as a result of major reforms that we've made. Today, we are asking how our foreign assistance can support the development goals that individual countries identify themselves – to help them progress along a continuum, from being recipients of assistance to nations that are powering their own transformation with economic growth, open trade and investment, and effective democratic institutions.

To meet this strategic objective we must continue to refine our ability to target the kinds of assistance that we supply, be it funding for public health and education or training of justices and police officers, to the unique demand of developing countries. We should define success not by how many dollars we move out the door year after year, but rather by how effectively our partners lift themselves permanently out of poverty. In short, we should strive for the long-term goal of working ourselves out of the development business altogether.

Now this will require a continued focus on making our foreign assistance more effective. We have learned from decades of experience how we can best support a country's effort to rise out of poverty. We know that when governments embrace free trade and free markets, invest in their people and govern justly, they can create prosperity and translate it into social justice for their citizens. More and more, our development programs must continue support to countries that are adopting smart policies, just as we tried to do with our Millennium Challenge Account, which has thus far devoted \$5.5 billion of development grants to sixteen partner countries.

Here too, we confront the question of resources. And what President Bush has done on this account, with the full support of Congress, has been nothing short of historic. We have doubled our assistance to Latin America, we have nearly tripled it worldwide, we have quadrupled it to Africa, leading a multilateral effort to forgive \$60 billion of debt for poor nations, launching \$1.2 billion to fight malaria, and a \$15 billion Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which the President has now asked Congress to double. This amounts to the largest international development effort since the Marshall Plan and it should be sustained and expanded by coming administrations.

Ultimately, though, we must realize that more than anything, it is free and fair trade and investment that will best enable our partners in the developing world to fight poverty and transform their countries. It is in times like these, when the idea of openness to the global economy is increasingly under fire, that Americans must remember that our free trade agreements are not matters only of domestic economics. They are also essential to the democratic development of our partners and, therefore, essential to the success of our foreign policy. If we as a nation unilaterally turn inward those who will suffer most will be the world's poorest people.

To realize the vision of transformational diplomacy, America will also need to forge a partnership between our civilians and our military. Our goal of fostering country progress will not always occur in peaceful places and without security there can be no development and without development there can be no democracy. Indeed, one of our most urgent national security challenges will remain the work that we do to support nations that are trying to lift themselves out of conflict, as we have done in Bosnia and Kosovo, Haiti and Liberia, and now in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

Further, America will remain engaged for many years in a new global confrontation unlike anything that we've ever faced. Leading security experts are increasingly thinking about the war on terrorism as a kind of global counterinsurgency. What that means is that the center of gravity in this

conflict is not just the terrorists themselves, but the populations they seek to influence and radicalize and in many cases, terrorize. So our success will depend on unity of effort between our civilian and military agencies. Our fighting men and women can create opportunities for progress and buy time and space. But it is our diplomats and development professionals who must seize this opportunity to support communities that are striving for democratic values, economic advancement, social justice, and educational opportunity. It is by nurturing the prospect of hope that we defeat the purveyors of hate.

In this effort, we see at the present another glimpse of what future diplomacy must be like. Our diplomats are providing critical expertise to our elite military units in the hunt for al Qaeda. And in Afghanistan and Iraq, as part of Provincial Reconstruction Teams serving far outside of the capitals of those countries, our civilians are helping local leaders and people to open markets and expand the institutions of liberty, to rebuild schools and hospitals and roads and restore hope and opportunity to those living in former terrorist strongholds.

Much of our work with the military these past several years has, frankly, been experimental, even improvisational. To staff our positions in Iraq, we have had to transform our personnel system and that is working. We now have some of the most senior and outstanding members of our Foreign Service leading our efforts in Baghdad, including four ambassador-rank officers. And most importantly, our diplomats in Iraq have answered the call to serve voluntarily and I thank them for that. Now, we must lay a new institutional foundation that will form the future nucleus of our civil-military partnerships.

We are urging Congress to meet the President's request to double the number of our positions for political advisers to military forces, diplomats who can work not only with four-star generals, but also deploy as civilian experts to Navy SEAL teams and to North Africa.

We are also urging Congress to fund our Civilian Stabilization Initiative, an idea that finds its greatest supporters among men and women in uniform. In recent years, we have tried two different approaches to post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction missions. Both have had their strengths and many weaknesses. One was in Afghanistan, where many countries adopted elements of the effort to build Afghan capacity. These were welcome efforts, but I have to tell you that we are still living with the incoherence of the effort. We see another approach was taken in Iraq where a single U.S. government department, the Department of Defense (DoD), found it difficult to harness the full range of our capabilities to conduct development and reconstruction in a counterinsurgency environment. The truth is that there was no single department, no institution in the U.S. government, capable of doing these tasks.

The answer is the Civilian Response Corps. This expeditionary group will be led by a core team of diplomats that could, say, deploy with the 82nd Airborne within 48 hours of a country falling into conflict. These first responders would be able to summon the skills of hundreds of civilian experts across our federal government, as well as thousands of private volunteers – doctors and lawyers, engineers and agricultural experts, police officers and public administrators. Not only would a Civilian Response Corps take the burden of post-conflict reconstruction off the backs of our fighting men and women, where it was never supposed to be in the first place; this civilian organization could be deployed in times of peace, to strengthen weak states and prevent their collapse in the future.

Ultimately though, it is not enough just to align our civilian and military tools. We must work to marry the efforts of our government to the good work of our society. The diplomacy of the past was defined by delivering demarches to foreign governments, reporting on foreign affairs, and keeping track of relations among states. That is changing today and we must change too. The diplomacy of the future will increasingly take the form – the form of aligning peoples – our people and those of the world. Indeed, we see the truest success of transformational diplomacy not only in the alliances of governments, but in the alliances of peoples – peoples with whom we trade and visit and share

values and work for prosperity and success as we do throughout our own hemisphere and throughout the world.

We define the success of transformational diplomacy as a new kind of engagement among peoples, new and ever more public diplomacy. This is not and cannot be the job of just American diplomats. It is a mission for the American people. That is why we are dramatically increasing our people-to-people engagement to connect students and journalists and scholars of the world. That is why we issued more student and exchange visas last year than at any other time in our history. That is why our government is building partnerships with American companies to connect young Palestinians and Lebanese to the world through information technology. And that is why we need the active engagement of young Americans like you. You are just as connected to the world as our diplomats. And you should use that power to become private ambassadors not for the American government, but for the American people.

And it is on that note that I would like to conclude with a message to all of you who may be considering a career in diplomacy or in development.

You are America's best and brightest. You are America's future. Your horizons are limitless. When you graduate, you are going to have lots of opportunities. You will have opportunities to continue your education. You might have an opportunity to make a fortune at a hedge fund. You will have an opportunity to do just about whatever you would like.

I would like you to consider one opportunity in particular. As I look out at you, the students here at Georgetown, I see the faces and the heritage of America, an America that is diverse, an America that believes in the equality and the intrinsic value of every human being. I see Americans who perhaps trace their ancestry to Asia, to Europe, to Latin America, to Africa. I see the descendants of slaves like myself. I see men and women who look like America. Our diplomats have to look like America. If America is going to stand for the belief that multi ethnic democracy can work and if we are going to show that multi ethnic democracy can work, then we cannot continue to show up in rooms where it looks as if multi ethnic democracy was left at home.

I want to ask you personally, consider a role in diplomacy, in development, in the exciting times in which we are engaged historically to bring the blessings of prosperity and liberty across the world to people who have never enjoyed them but who I assure you want them just as much as you do. When you have a chance to look back on your life, I hope that it will have included service to a cause higher than yourself, so in what will be an unabashedly very clear commercial: come join us at the DoS.